Building Bridges and Cultural Competence through a Sports Medicine Outreach Program in a Diverse Urban Setting

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Abstract

Hypothesis/Issue: The Saint Louis University (SLU)-Athletic Training (AT) Program at a private research university in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse city is committed to ethnically diverse students interested in sports medicine. The SLU AT Program also looks to build cultural competence in its students. Funded by an Ethnic Diversity Enhancement Grant, an AT Club was developed at a diverse urban public high school. The Roosevelt High School (RHS) AT Club met at least four times per year over a three years. Students from the SLU AT Program also served as student mentors for the club.

Method: RHS AT Club students completed surveys regarding their experience. The surveys asked about their understanding of AT education and their feelings about attending college and a career as an AT. SLU AT student mentors also completed a survey at the end of the experience. They both were also asked to provide comments on their experience.

Observations/Outcomes: Data from the surveys showed significant changes in several of the factors, including knowledge of the profession and their feelings about attending college and a career as an AT. SLU AT student mentors also completed a survey at the end of the experience. They both were also asked to provide comments on their experience.

Conclusions: This program successfully nurtured interest in Sports Medicine among ethnically diverse students and supported the development of cultural competence among AT students.

Results

RHS AT Club Student Surveys

Data from the surveys are in the tables below. Significant changes were made in several of the factors, including knowledge of the profession and their feelings about attending college and a career as an AT. Representative quotes include:

• "My favorite part was being able to experience different things and also being motivated by the guest speakers that were brought in."
• "I loved going on the field trips and I loved learning new things. I think this is my new career!"

SLU AT Student Mentor Surveys

In 2017, the SLU AT Student Mentors were surveyed on their experience in the RHS AT Club. They were asked to give 4 words that described their experience. Those words are depicted in the word cloud. The also were asked open-ended questions about their experience. Representative quotes include:

• "As an AT, it will be important to be able to communicate and relate to a culturally and ethnically diverse patient population...[the RHS AT Club] has helped me be able to do that."
• "[The RHS AT Club] has made me more patient and understanding of different backgrounds."
• "I got to engage with a very different population than I have in previous clinical experiences."
• "Working with the club really reinforced the notion of knowing your athletes, their ambitions and struggles. These are often essential in properly caring for them."

Supported by an Ethnic Diversity Enhancement Grant from the National Athletic Trainers’ Association Ethnic Diversity Advisory Committee.